

## Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EA-07 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 FMC-01 NSAE-00 CG-00

DLOS-09 OES-07 CU-04 ACDA-07 PM-05 H-01 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /102 W

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R 150925Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 959

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 11735

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: US, UR, CH

SUBJECT: ILICHEV ON SINO - SOVIET RELATIONS

REF: PEKING 1680

1. DURING MY AUGUST 12 CALL ON DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ILICHEV REGARDING THE NORTH KOREAN ASSERTION OF A MILITARY MARITIME BOUNDARY (SEPTTEL), I TOOK THE OCCASION TO ASK HIM INFORMALLY WHEN HE PLANNED TO RETURN TO PEKING AS CHIEF SOVIET NEGOTIATOR TO DISCUSS THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER QUESTION.

2. STATING THAT "THE TALKS ARE CONTINUING," ILICHEV SAID HE WOULD RESUME HIS PARTICIPATION (AFTER A SIX MONTH ABSENCE) AS SOON AS THIS WAS FEASIBLE, BUT OF COURSE THE DATES MUST BE CONVENIENT TO BOTH SIDES. WHEN I ASKED WHETHER HE WAS OPTIMISTIC HE REPLIED "WE ARE BY NATURE OPTIMISTIC AND IN THIS CASE WE ARE NOT PESSIMISTIC." THE LOGIC OF HISTORY AND EVENTS, HE MAINTAINED, SHOWS THAT SOONER OR LATER THE ISSUE WILL BE RESOLVED PROVIDED THAT BOTH SIDES DEMONSTRATE GOOD WILL AND EFFORT. HE THEN DISCOURSED SOMEWHAT PHILOSOPHICALLY ALONG FAMILIAR LINES; EVENTS HAD TAKEN PLACE OVER THE  
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CENTURIES ALONG THIS, THE WORLD'S LONGEST BORDER (E.G. "RIVERS CHANGED THEIR COURSE AND ISLANDS APPEARED AND DISAPPEARED"); THE RUSSIAN, CHINESE, MANCHU AND LATIN TEXTS OF OLD TREATIES HAD BEEN GIVEN VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS. "BUT THE SOVIET POSITION REMAINS THAT TERRITORIAL PROBLEMS DO NOT EXIST." AT THE SAME TIME, THE SOVIETS STAND FOR NORMALIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS AND THE RESOLUTION

OF OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS.

3. IN CLOSING I SAID IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR ME TO HAVE HIS FURTHER VIEWS ON CHINA AND PERHAPS THIS COULD BE ARRANGED AFTER THE UPCOMING VISIT TO PEKING BY SECRETARY VANCE. ILICHEV IMMEDIATELY REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD BE "NOT ONLY POSSIBLE BUT USEFUL."

4. COMMENT: ILICHEV'S REMARK THAT THE TALKS ARE CONTINUING APPARENTLY REFERS SPECIFICALLY TO THE CURRENT LOWER LEVEL RIVER NAVIGATION TALKS (REFTEL). ILICHEV CAREFULLY AVOIDED ANY ANTI-CHINESE POLEMIC OR INSINUATIONS ARE SINO-US RELATIONS. HE WAS AFFABLE THROUGHOUT AND SEEMED GENUINELY INTERESTED IN A FURTHER EXCHANGE FOLLOWING THE VANCE VISIT TO CHINA. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT WE FOLLOW UP. TOWARD THAT END, I WOULD APPRECIATE APPROPRIATE BACKGROUND GUIDANCE AND TALKING POINTS FOR CONTINUING THE DIALOGUE. TOON

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## Message Attributes

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